



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, EUROPE, AND SEVENTH ARMY  
UNIT 29058  
APO AE 09081

AEUPE

MAR 19 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: Army in Europe Retiree Council Minutes

1. The minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council meeting on 4 February 2004 have been reviewed and approved.
2. The point of contact for this memorandum is the USAREUR Retirement Services Officer at DSN 379-6080 or email: [usareur-rso@hq.1perscom.army.mil](mailto:usareur-rso@hq.1perscom.army.mil).



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EA ASG/BSB  
EA USAREUR ASG/BSB RSO  
EA USAREUR Retiree Council Member



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**THE ADJUTANT GENERAL**  
**UNIT 29058**  
**APO AE 09081**

AEAAG-AERC

4 February 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR Commanding General, United States Army, Europe, and Seventh Army,  
ATTN: AEACG, Unit 29351, APO AE 09014

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Army in Europe Retiree Council Meeting

1. The 90th meeting of the Army in Europe Retiree Council (AERC) convened in the conference room of the DCofS, G1, USAREUR, Campbell Barracks, Heidelberg, at 0900 hours on 4 February 2004.

2. The following persons were present:

a. Voting Members:

COL (Ret) Alan B. Phillips	Vice President
CW3 (Ret) Sandra K. Simpson	Secretary
SFC (Ret) Randall Blackwell	Member
COL (Ret) Steven V. Boylan	Member
LTC (Ret) Sheldon Dick	Member
CW4 (Ret) Robert Gambert	Member
1SG (Ret) Donald Gwinn	Member
SGM (Ret) Donald Norris	Member
MAJ (Ret) Donald W. Struve	Member
CW3 (Ret) Mack C. West	Member

b. Nonvoting Members:

Ms. Avril Barker	Representing LTC Bridget Niehus, DCofS, G1 Representative
Mr. Don Wade	Representing Mr. James Call IMA-E Representative
Mr. R. Wayne McEntire	USAREUR RSO
CMSGT Bobby Roberts	President, USAFE Retiree Council

c. Visitors:

Mr. Glen Snow	AG Representative
CPT Traci Powell	Chief, PAD, PSSD, 1st PERSCOM
Mr. Gerald Owens	PSSD, 1 <sup>st</sup> PERSCOM

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3. Opening Remarks.

a. The Vice President welcomed the assembly and noted the excused absence of the President.

b. Council reviewed and approved the proposed agenda.

4. Approval of Minutes. Council approved the minutes of the 5 November 2003 meeting as written with the reminder that the name of the Council is now the Army in Europe Retiree Council.

5. President's Report. COL Phillips reported for COL Mentell the following:

a. The President had office calls with the following individuals:

BG Russell L. Frutiger	DCofS, G1, USAREUR
Mr. Russell Hall	Director, Europe Region, U.S. Army Installation Management Agency
CAPT (USN) Brendan Gray	Deputy Commander, U.S. Navy Region Europe, USNAVEUR
COL (USA) Patricia Mulcahy	Director, Manpower, Personnel and Administration (J1), USEUCOM
COL Ervin Pearson	Deputy Chief of Staff, USAREUR
Ms. Anne Marie Murray	Chief, Future, DCofS, G1, USAREUR

Highlights of the meetings were:

(1) He discussed with BG Frutiger, Mr. Hall, and COL Pierson the retiree demographics in Europe, the organization and functions of the Council and the relationship with the RSO during this period of transition. He also discussed the issues USAREUR submitted for consideration by the Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council.

(2) COL Mentell, accompanied by Mr. Snow and Mr. McEntire, briefed COL Mulcahy on support provided to Army retirees in Europe and made her aware of the background on the Tri-Service Meeting of Military Retiree Councils in Europe.

6. DCofS, G1, Report.

a. Ms. Barker provided the personnel update. Family Readiness Groups encourage participation from all members of the community to include retirees.

b. Ms. Murray reported on the realignment of functions between 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM and IMA-E Region. Functions that do not deploy to the battlefield are being considered for transfer. The Retirement Services Program is one of the functional areas being considered. No firm timeline has been determined. The transformation should be transparent to recipients of services.

7. IMA-E Report. Mr. Wade reported:

Mr. Wade reported that most of his material had been covered in the previous report but did mention that one of his additional duties is as the Voting Assistance Officer. He encouraged retirees to submit their absentee ballot requests.

8. Adjutant General Report. Mr. Snow reported on the USAREUR Retiree Actions Implementation Plan:

a. Coordinate with USAREUR Retiree Council (Priority 1): [Use the Council for coordinating actions affecting the retirees, their family members and annuitants; Reinforce within the staff the use of the Council in this role.] Council will play an increasingly important role during the transformation period. Nothing additional was reported.

b. Update USAREUR Regulation 608-25, Retirement Services Program (Priority 1): [Publish an update to USAREUR Regulation 608-25, dated 31 October 1991.] The document, now the Army in Europe Supplement 1 to AR 600-8-7 was published on 17 September 2003. A number of limited changes were made in Change 1 published in January 2004.

c. HQDA DCSPER Letter "Support for Retired Community" (Priority 1): [Endorse to ASG and BSB commander the annual HQDA letter "Support for the Retired Community."] A USAREUR letter, forwarding the HQDA DCofS, G-1, letter dated 24 February 2003, was published. This will continue to be a yearly event.

d. USAREUR Retirement Services Web Site (Priority 1): [Update and maintain a USAREUR/1st PERSCOM Retirement Services Web Page.] A requirement to be a webmaster is to be a graduate of Dream Weaver training, but the training is not easily available. Currently, limited information is being posted.

e. USAREUR Retiree Bulletin (Priority 2): [Continue to publish a semiannual USAREUR Retiree Bulletin targeted to the retiree/annuitant population in the USAREUR geographical area of responsibility.] Latest bulletin was published last week and is available on the web. Next bulletin is due in June.

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f. Tri-Service Coordination Meeting (Priority 2): [Support and participate in the Semi-Annual Meetings of the Tri-Service Coordinating Meeting of Military Retiree Councils in Europe.] COL Mentell, Mr. Snow and Mr. McEntire attended a meeting with the EUCOM J1 and obtained a commitment to encourage formation of a true tri-service council.

g. USAREUR Guidance to Casualty Assistance Officers on Death Certificates: (Priority 2): [Publish USAREUR-unique guidance to supplement the HQDA Casualty Assistant Officer's Guide.] Although previously considered a completed action, this is still a problem in some areas. 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM did some research with DFAS concerning how much of a problem it has been for annuitants to be paid if they did not have a death certificate with a cause of death. Federal Benefits Units in Frankfurt gets an automatic notification from the civil register which includes cause of death. Letter is generated to spouse with instructions what to do to get a death certificate with cause of death and the office then issues the appropriate certificate. Information needs to be provided to RSOs during training.

h. Breakout by BSBs of German Postal Code/Army Post Offices (Priority 2): [Provide periodically to USAREUR RSOs a list of retirees and annuitants in their areas of responsibility.] 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM will continue to use the addresses provided by retirees ("bottom-fed"). The list of retirees in theater ("top-fed") cannot be broken out in an economical fashion at this time. This will remain an issue that IMA-E will have to consider. Council considers it essential that ASG and BSB commanders have information on the retiree and annuitants in their areas of responsibility.

i. Local Retiree Council (LRC) Presidents/Retirement Service Officers (RSO) Standardized Email Accounts. (Priority 3): [Provide guidance to promote the creation of generic email address for RSOs and LRC presidents.] A generic address format has been set up, although it may vary by ASG.

j. Local Retiree Council (LRC) Minutes/Appointment (Priority 3): [Maintain current LRC minutes and appointment documents IAW UR 608-25. Not all LRCs appear to be complying with Army in Europe Supplement 1 to AR 600-8-7, which requires LRC appointment documents and minutes to be provided to the AG.] No report.

## 9. USAFE Report.

CMSgt Roberts reported the USAFE Council is not receiving as much input from the field as it had in the past. He will bring the issue of medical air evacuation to the Chief of Staff, Air Force, Retiree Council meeting. He will also bring up the issue of direct deposit to foreign banks. A new issue is that personnel in grade E9 are no longer afforded Distinguished Visitor status when flying space available. The only personnel afforded that status now will be O6s and above.

10. Progress Reports:

a. Retiree Council Liaison Matrix and Individual Liaison Report: [Although Council recognizes that its members do not directly “represent” the communities in which they may reside, the matrix identifies leaders with whom Council members should maintain liaison regarding retiree services and issues.] COL Boylan briefed the quarterly results and requested all members to provide input at least two weeks prior to the next meeting. If structure changes are desired, we should send them under separate cover to COL Boylan. He requested special assistance with the alignment of postal units.

b. Retiree Mini-Survey: COL Phillips and COL Boylan said they were continuing to analyze the approximately 180 mini-surveys they already have, but were still waiting for the surveys completed at the 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG RAD. They updated the interim results with 21 additional responses from the USAREUR RAD that they received after the initial batch. The major conclusions did not change as a result of the additional responses, for example, two-thirds of respondents do not receive Army Echoes and one-third does not receive the USAREUR Retiree Bulletin. There appears to be a significant inconsistency between addresses on the DFAS database and the individuals who actually received products from HQDA or USAREUR.

This underscores requirement to provide local BSB commanders with data on retirees in their footprint. If further data refinement is required, the USAREUR Deputy Chief of Staff has offer the support of the ORSA cell.

11. Special Reports.

a. USAREUR Retiree Appreciation Day 2003 After Action Report: Mr. Owens said they have most of the information but are still waiting for the information from the Wellness Clinic and Heidelberg DENTAC. They need to determine how to combine services required with attendance at formal presentations. Report will be published shortly.

b. USAREUR Retiree Appreciation Day 2004: Mr. Owens said the RAD for 2004 is presently scheduled for 11 September 2004. AERC desires to be included in the planning phases. 1<sup>st</sup> PERSCOM is reviewing suggestions for guest speakers. There will be an AAR meeting immediately after the RAD with input from all major players.

c. Retirement Services Officer Training: Mr. Owens said the training is presently scheduled for 20-21 May. Survivor Benefits training will be included. The Council requested the President be given time to make a presentation. Mr. Snow agreed.

12. Draft of AERC Constitution and By-Laws.

LTC Dick reported no significant changes from previous draft version. He recommended we take last review and discuss at next meeting especially in light of changing relationships within staff channels.

13. Issues for Discussion by Chief of Staff, Army Retiree Council.

a. USAREUR submitted two topics for consideration by the 2004 Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council.

(1) Medical Air Evacuation: USAREUR proposed the creation of a medical passenger category within Space-Available Category II which would provide for round-trip travel for medical referral and follow-up care. This is a new issue.

Background: Until recently, all Tricare beneficiaries traveling for medical appointments who did not require in-flight care had the opportunity to travel through the Aeromedical Evacuation System at no cost to the beneficiary and no additional cost to the Government. However, with the divestiture of the C-9 aircraft from the system and the transition to requirements-based use of other aircraft for aeromedical evacuation, retirees to whom eligibility for enrollment in Tricare Prime has not been extended - most significantly overseas retirees and their family members - have only the alternatives to travel by opportune military air on a space-available basis (Category VI) or by commercial air at their own expense.

(2) Direct Deposit to Foreign Banks: USAREUR proposed that DFAS should be urged to establish without delay procedures for a direct deposit of retired and annuity pay to foreign banks for beneficiaries residing in foreign countries. This is an update of the issue which the CSA Retiree Council has previously supported.

Background: The DOD Comptroller did not support a request submitted by a retiree association stating that there were insufficient retirees and annuitants receiving their proceeds by check-to-address to justify instituting an electronic system of direct deposits. Discussion pointed out that the number of beneficiaries receiving their proceeds by check-to-address will increase dramatically as transformation reduces the number of military banks and credit unions where they can maintain accounts and of facilities where they can cash US checks.

b. The USAREUR representative to the Chief of Staff, Army, Retiree Council was instructed to continue to support the following topics.

(1) Concurrent Receipt of DoD Retired Pay and DVA Disability Compensation: Although Congress has passed legislation for at least two different plans to partially permit concurrent receipt, legislation to permit full receipt is still pending.

(2) Weight Restriction on APO/FPO Usage: OSD has not reconsidered this restriction even though the Army concurred in removing the restriction entirely and the Air Force recommended it be raised to 5 pounds.

(3) Waiver of Medicare Part B Penalty: The Congress has passed an act which would grant a one-time waiver of the penalty for late enrollment in Medicare Part B by individuals who had deferred enrollment but then decided to enroll to satisfy a requirement for participation in Tricare-for-Life. Implementing instructions are being prepared.

(4) Receipt of Army Echoes: The Army Retirement Services Office is still looking into the problems associated with OCONUS mailing addresses. It appears that the problem is not with DFAS but with the way the Army processes the information received from DFAS in the production of mailing labels.

c. The Council reviewed a list of 38 issues submitted by Army installations worldwide.

#### 14. Review of Army in Europe Regulation 600-700.

COL Phillips pointed out that this regulation defines the Individual Logistic Support authorized to all personnel in Army in Europe theater. Review was an excellent example of how the AERC can be used as a member of the staff. SGM Norris and COL Boylan will take Council input and synthesize and consolidate and forward input to President and Vice President for forwarding to the Adjutant General.

#### 15. Retiree Demographics (COL Phillips):

COL Phillips presented the latest version of demographics as provided to COL Mentell by the Defense Manpower Data Center.

Highlights are as follows:

(1) The number of retirees and annuitants in theater (Europe, Africa and the Middle-East) remain stable at a little over 14,000 retirees and 2,000 annuitants.

(2) The percentage of retiree and annuitants 65 years of age or older remains stable at approximately 25% for retirees and 75% for annuitants.

(3) The distribution by service is stable at approximately 50 % Army, 40% Air Force, and 10% Navy/Marine Corps.

(4) The distribution by geographical areas is stable at approximately 55% Germany, 18% United Kingdom, 6 % Italy, 5% Spain, and 4% Benelux.



16. Liaison Discussion.

a. Medical/Dental Access: Availability of space available care varies by location. Some clinics have been forced to severely restrict access by retirees because of deployments while others have been able to maintain or improve routine access. COL Conrad Bodai, Commander, U.S. Army Dental Command Europe, will depart this summer and be replaced by COL Mike Cuenin, currently the commander of the U.S. Army Dental Activity Würzburg.

b. Update on Local Retiree Councils: No report. Council requested CW3 West provide an update at next meeting.

c. Update on Local Retiree Associations: CW4 Gambert reported contacts with Darmstadt and Wiesbaden. Council requested Mr. Gambert provide complete update to all Council members by 27 February.

d. Army Family Action Plan: Retirees are being involved in a majority of communities.

e. Unofficial Retiree Web Page: LTC Dick recommended that it not be renewed when license expires.

17. Council Administration.

a. Existing Member Vacancies: There are two membership vacancies on the Council. The AG Representative has received two nomination packages in response to the letters sent to the commanders of the 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG (Vicenza) and 6<sup>th</sup> ASG (Stuttgart) asking for nominations.

(1) The 22<sup>nd</sup> ASG has not yet forwarded the commander's endorsement so the Council could not be considered the nomination.

(2) The Executive Committee of the Council presented the nomination by the 6<sup>th</sup> ASG of MSG (Ret) Warren Harris. The Council approved the nomination and recommended to the Adjutant General the acceptance of the nomination and the issuance of appointment orders.

b. Projected member vacancies: CW4 Gambert 31 Dec 04 and COL Boylan 31 Mar 05. The Council decided to take not action at this time.

c. Unprojected Member Vacancies: None

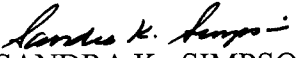
d. Projected Officer Vacancies: The next officer vacancies occur as follows: 1) the President on 30 June 2004, 2) the Vice President on 30 June 2004 and 3) Secretary on 31 Dec 04. The Council decided to take no action at this time.

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18. Time Line for URC Administrative Actions: COL Phillips reminded council members to review minutes and provide comments when they are published. If members desire to add items to the agenda, they should be provided at initial review of draft review.

19. Selection of Next Meeting Date and Adjournment. The Council agreed to hold its next meeting on 12 May 04. The Vice President adjourned the meeting at 1610 hours.

  
SANDRA K. SIMPSON  
CW3, Retired  
Secretary

  
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USAREUR Retirement Services  
Officer